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The Gull

Golden Gate Audubon Society Newsletter
Volume 77 • No. 5 May 1995

Environmental Bill of Rights

JOIN THE PLEDGE FOR AN ENVIRONMENTAL BILL OF RIGHTS

Did Americans vote for dismantling 25 years of environmental legislation last November? We don't think so, but the majority in Congress seems to think we did. A truly alarming anti-environmental agenda is hurtling through Congress, and unless there is a strong public protest, 25 years of environmental protection may be in shreds by the end of the year. At stake is protection for clean water, clean air, wetlands and endangered species.

Join us in a citizens campaign calling for a renewed commitment to environmental protection in the U.S. This spring, citizens across the country are launching an Environmental Bill of Rights pledge drive and National Audubon Society is joining in the campaign. We are offering to collect thousands of pledges to the Environmental Bill of Rights and, together with other environmental organizations and citizen groups, present them to Congress in mid-July.

Please take a moment to sign the attached pledge to the Environmental Bill of Rights and get 3 others to do the same, and send it to Audubon's Washington, D.C., office before July 1. We will join other organizations in presenting at least one million petitions to Congress this summer.

Every American has the right to a safe and healthy environment.

We urge all elected officials – local, state and federal – to protect that right. We oppose any measures that would roll back the environmental progress of the last 25 years. We commit ourselves to supporting the following simple principles, and will hold public officials who represent us accountable for their stewardship of the planet.

I. Prevent pollution. Every American is entitled to air, water, food and communities free from toxic chemicals. Government policies and regulatory standards must prevent pollution before it happens, expand citizens' right to know about toxics, and guarantee protection for citizens, particularly for the most vulnerable among us – infants, children, pregnant women and the elderly.

II. Preserve America's national heritage, wild and beautiful, for our children and future generations. Wildlife, forests, mountains, prairies, wetlands, rivers, lakes, coastlines, urban parks and open space are all part of our national heritage.

III. End the give-aways of public assets, such as mineral, timber and grazing resources. End the subsidies for oil and energy companies. Polluters should pay to clean up the mess they create. No one has the right to use property in a way that destroys or degrades the surrounding community. We reject the idea that good neighbors must pay bad ones not to pollute.

IV. Conserve America's natural resources by controlling waste, increasing energy efficiency, and protecting against overuse and abuse. Encourage sustainable technologies that meet human needs without destroying the environment.

V. Get the big money out of politics. No more government for sale. Let's take our government back from the big campaign contributors and exploiters who control it today.

NAME (PLEASE PRINT)	SIGNATURE
ADDRESS	CITY/STATE/ZIP
NAME (PLEASE PRINT)	SIGNATURE
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NAME (PLEASE PRINT)	SIGNATURE
ADDRESS	CITY/STATE/ZIP

Please return signed petitions **BEFORE JULY 1** to: Environmental Bill of Rights, National Audubon Society, 666 Pennsylvania Ave., SE, #200, Washington, DC 20003-4319 TEL: (202) 547-9009 FAX: (202) 547-9002. To obtain additional copies of the Environmental Bill of Rights pledge sheet, call (800) 542-2748

News from the Ranch

Dan Murphy

PUBLIC SEASON

It's mid-season now so you can expect lots of action at the heronry. The Great Blue Herons should have adult-looking young in their nests, but it will be many more weeks before they fledge.

The ever-graceful Great Egrets should have young in their nests too. As May zips by, just about all the eggs will hatch, so our main attraction will be a hundred or more young egrets. Some will be fuzzy white puff-balls, and others will appear to be startling white by-products of a punk rock concert. There is no need to be alarmed: like the rest of us they will calm down after adolescence.

On the wildflower front, May is late in the season. Here and there a bloom will break the forest floor or a dark recess near a stream, but most wildflowers are spent. California buckeye and morning glory vines will be in bloom. Bush monkeyflower, a very special shrub, should be at its peak bloom too. One particularly nice specimen is on the trail to the overlook, on your right in a little triangle as you turn from the Griffin Trail to the overlook. Stop for a moment and check it out: the leaves are sticky to discourage insect lips (What? they don't have lips!) and the flowers are incredible. Gently touch the stigma with a stick, a pen or your finger (if you're not afraid of a vicious monkeyflower bite) and watch the flower parts close. Wow! a flower that moves right before your eyes.

Insects are pretty neat at this time of year also. If you're lucky you might see a wasp or predatory fly doing something terrible to a fellow creature. If violence isn't your thing, break out your Peterson's *Field Guide to Western Butterflies* and try matching the single-winged specimens in the book to the double-winged ones fluttering along the trail. Better yet, ask our very own Peterson, Ray, which butterflies he's seen lately.

HOSTING AT THE RANCH

We continue to need hosts on weekends and holidays until July 16. Do join us for a relaxing day at the Ranch. Enjoy yourself and meet some fellow Audubon members as you greet our visitors and introduce them to ACR.

On March 26, Leslie Lethridge, Norma Jellison, Rosilyn and Tom White, and Joan and I took our turn at hosting. It was a beautiful, sunny day with no wind. We arrived at about 9:45 after a lazy drive over Mt. Tam. For the most part, we just spent the day greeting people and pointing them at the trail to the heronry. I noticed one person who had come because he first visited the Ranch 10 or 15 years before with a school group. I'm always amazed how many children are so impressed with the Ranch that they remember it for years and eventually return. As usual, a few people said they had driven by for years and always wondered what ACR was. That's when it's fun to point above the buildings and give them a first glimpse of the heronry through their windshields.

Since there were six of us, we all managed to take time out to hike to the overlook. Joan and I hiked over to Garden Club Canyon. The ceanothus there is so huge that it seems more like a tree than a shrub. We took the cool nature trail to the Griffin Loop trail and then to the overlook. I found only one banana slug, but it was great to put him on a piece of glass I carry for such purposes and watch him slime around for a while. It was none-too-easy removing his track from the glass. The Douglas iris and milkmaids were at their peak, but other wildflowers still hadn't made a real appearance. At the overlook we found the herons were well settled, but the Great Egrets were just coming in and only 8 were on nests. Ray Peterson told us he had seen a dozen Snowy Egrets the day before. Some even showed red lores (small area between eye and upper bill), something seen only for a few days during the breeding season.

We closed the gate at 4 and were on our way by 4:30. The trip back was a little more hectic since everyone who had spent the day in West Marin seemed to have decided to return home at the same time . . . but then, you can't win them all.

That was our day at the Ranch. Why not give yourself a great day and help visitors enjoy a special time too by joining us as a Ranch host. Volunteer by calling ACR at (415) 868-9422 or call the GGAS office at (510) 843-2222.

BOUVERIE DOCENT TRAINING

This program is a wonderful opportunity to introduce 3rd- and 4th-graders to the incredible world of nature. Orientation meetings are scheduled for June 1 and August 10; docent training class will begin September 7 at Bouverie Audubon Preserve in Glen Ellen. If you're free on weekdays, this could be the perfect program for you. Call (707) 938-4554 for further information.

ACR Seminar: *The Ecology of Herons & Egrets*, Bolinas Lagoon Preserve, Saturday, May 20. (\$10 individual/\$20 family of 4 or fewer). Call (415) 868-9422 to register.



Field Trips Calendar

Saturday, May 6

Sunol Regional Park

Meet at 8:30 a.m. inside the park entrance at the parking lot on the left. Take I-680 south, turn off at Calaveras Rd. (the freeway sign is marked: Calaveras Rd., Dumbarton Bridge, Calif. 84). Go south (left) and follow the signs to Sunol Regional Park, about five miles. Bring lunch and liquids in preparation for a four to five mile walk. We expect to see a variety of the common breeding birds, including flycatchers, vireos, and warblers.

Leaders: Gloria Markowitz and Ken Ackerman (415) 892-2910.

\$ (*)

Sunday, May 7

Wildcat Canyon Regional Park

Meet at 8 a.m. by the Arlington Clubhouse on Arlington Blvd. (next to the tennis courts between Brewster Dr. and Thors Bay Rd.) in El Cerrito. From there we will make a short drive to the trailhead on Rifle Range Rd.

We will encounter hills as we walk a transect of the canyon to bird in brushlands, oak woodlands, riparian streamsides and grasslands. We anticipate seeing a few late migrants and a good representation of nesting birds including Grasshopper Sparrows and Lazuli Buntings. We will also identify common trees of the area. People with allergies should be aware that we will encounter grassy conditions. Bring lunch and liquids for a six-mile hike. The trip will end at 2 p.m. Leader: Malcolm Sproul (510) 376-8945. (*)

Wednesday, May 10

Mini-trip to Briones Regional Park

Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the west entrance to Briones Regional Park off Bear Creek Rd. Meet in the parking area on the left just beyond the fee booth.

(Directions: see field trip above scheduled for Briones Regional Park on Sunday, April 23.)

We should see Northern Orioles, Lark Sparrows, Ash-throated Flycatchers and Lazuli Buntings. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510) 351-9301, and Jean-Marie Spoelman.

Saturday, May 13

Briones Regional Park - Birding by Ear

Meet at 8 a.m. at the west entrance to Briones Regional Park off Bear Creek Rd. Meet in the parking area on the left, just beyond the fee booth.

(Directions: see field trip above scheduled for Briones Regional Park on Sunday, April 23.)

Be prepared to hike five miles through hilly terrain. Bring lunch and liquids, a hat and sunscreen. We will study the songs and calls of common breeding birds of the East Bay. Leader: Dave Cornman. (510) 825-2106. \$ (*)

Sunday, May 14

Mountain Lake, San Francisco

Meet in the parking lot at the end of 15th Avenue, just north of Lake St., at 8 a.m. Bring binoculars and a field guide if you have them. We expect to see three or four species of swallows plus a variety of waterbirds and landbirds during this morning walk. Beginners welcome. Leaders: Mary Louise Rosegay and Jan Andersen (415) 922-5866.

Saturday, May 20

Bouverie Audubon Preserve (near Glen Ellen)

This 400-acre preserve is known for its flowering plants (over 350 species) as well as 100 bird species.

This trip is by reservation only. Reservations must be received (mail or telephone) by May 16th.

Address:

Bouverie Audubon Preserve

P.O. Box 1195

Glen Ellen, CA 95442

Telephone: (707) 938-4554

Directions and information about meeting time and place will be mailed to participants.

Saturday, May 27

Tennessee Cove, Golden Gate National Recreation Area

Meet at 8:30 a.m. at trailhead. From San Francisco take Hwy. 101 north to Marin County and exit on Hwy. 1 toward Mill Valley and Stinson Beach. After about one quarter mile, turn left onto Tennessee Valley Rd. and continue to road end. Lunch optional for this half-day trip through riparian area to the shore. Beginners welcome. Leader: Bob Hogan (415) 258-0811 (*)

Friday-Sunday, June 2-4

Birding by Ear in Yosemite

The lower and middle elevations of Yosemite National Park are alive with singing birds in early June. A variety of habitats support a rich diversity of birdlife, typically including seven flycatchers (four Empidonax), three vireos, seven warblers, and many other species in full song and breeding plumage. Meet at the Big Oak Flat entrance on Friday, June 2, at 3 p.m., and on Saturday, June 3, at 7 a.m. (If you arrive later Saturday morning, meet the group in Hodgdon Meadow behind the Hodgdon Meadow Group Campsites.) The meeting place is the large parking lot 100 yards inside the park entrance on Hwy. 120 (30 miles from Yosemite Valley).

Nearby campgrounds include Hodgdon Meadow (reservation required) and Crane Flat in the Park; Carlon and Middle Fork (primitive Forest Service campgrounds) on the road to Hetch Hetchy, and Sweetwater on Hwy. 120.

Lodging on Hwy. 120 includes Yosemite Gatehouse (209) 379-2260, Evergreen Lodge (209) 379-2606, Lee's Middle Fork (209) 962-7608, and Buck Meadows Lodge (209) 962-6366.

Bring warm clothes, raingear, rubber boots (wet meadows). Be prepared to pack a lunch and walk about six miles. Leader: Dave Cornman. (510) 825-2106 \$ (*)

Wednesday, June 14

Mini-trip to Redwood Regional Park

Meet in the park at 9:30 a.m. Take the Warren Freeway (Hwy. 13), exit onto Redwood Rd., and proceed east about three miles to Redwood Gate, southern entrance to the park. Meet just inside park in small parking lot on the left. We should see Black-headed Grosbeak, Swainson's Thrush, Northern Oriole, Solitary, Hutton's and Warbling vireos. Bring lunch. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510) 351-9301, and Jean-Marie Spoelman.

Saturday-Sunday, June 17-18

Yuba Pass and vicinity

On Saturday, meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Yuba Pass Summit parking area (Hwy. 49), 15 miles east of Sierra City. Take I-80 to Truckee, go north on Hwy. 89 to Sierraville, and take Hwy. 49 west to Yuba Summit. (Or take Hwy. 49 northeast from Auburn for a slower but more scenic route.) We will bird the mountain areas for summer residents including dippers, flycatchers, warblers, and Calliope Hummingbirds.

On Sunday, meet at 8 a.m. at the intersection of Hwy. 49 and 89 (by the saw mill) about 1 mile north of Sattley. We will caravan to Sierra Valley and look for many of the birds of the eastern Sierra including White-faced Ibis, Sandhill Cranes, Sage Thrashers and Yellow-headed Blackbirds.

Camping is available at the following U. S. Forest Service campgrounds off Hwy. 49: Wild Plum (elev. 3300') 2 mi. east of Sierra City, and Chapman Creek (elev. 5800') 8 mi. east of Sierra City. Lodging is available at Sierra City: Sierra Chalet (916) 862-1110, Buttes Motel (916) 862-1170, Herringtons's Sierra Pines (916) 963-1151, Basset Station Motel (916) 862-1297, Sierra Buttes Inn Motel (916) 862-1191, and Yuba River Inn (916) 862-1122. Leader: Peter Allen. (415) 892-8063

Plan Ahead:

Friday-Sunday, June 23-25

Lassen Volcanic National Park

Leaders: Dan and Joan Murphy. (415) 564-0074

Thursday-Sunday, July 6-9

Backpacking Trip to Snag Lake, Lassen Volcanic National Park

Leader: David Rice (510) 527-7210

For details on above trips see June issue of *The Gull*.

Trips marked with \$ go to parks or other sites that require an entrance fee.

Carpooling arrangements will be attempted for trips marked (*).

Problems: if you need a ride or can take a passenger, or if you need information and have difficulty reaching a field trip leader, call Russ Wilson, Field Trips Committee Chair (510) 524-2399.

A Letter to GGAS

As you know, Bob and I are Marin County Audubon members, but always subscribe to *The Gull* so we can join you on some of your birding overnight field trips.

We want to write in appreciation of Dave Cornman's excellent Birding by Ear Yosemite trip [last June]. Dave not only knew where the birds were, but with tape in hand, lectured about differences in calls as the birds perched overhead listening! ... He is a knowledgeable teacher and had a rapt audience.

Mary and Bob Mayer

HOW LONG WILL LITTER LAST?

Orange and banana peels 2-5 weeks
Cigarette butts 1-5 years
Plastic film containers 20-30 years
Aluminum cans & tabs 80-100 years

Many of our field trips involve packing a lunch, sometimes to be eaten at established picnic areas, but many times enjoyed along the trail, beside a stream, or on the shore of a lake - places where a trashcan would be a blight on the landscape. So after lunch what should you do with your litter? Bury it? Throw it out of sight? Or hide it under a rock?

None of the above. You pack it out! That's the obvious answer of experienced hikers, campers, and environmentally-conscious birders. Most all of us fit at least one of those categories, but this message is for the novice and the thoughtless (and a reminder for the rest of us).

Also, don't leave leftover food for the animals. You'll be doing them a favor by not attracting them to "people food." With summer approaching, some of our trips include camping, creating opportunities for more litter. Before leaving a campsite in the backcountry, burn all litter that is burnable (foil doesn't burn), and pack out everything else. If you look back and there's no trace that you've been there, you've done a good job, and the beauty of the great outdoors will remain unspoiled for others to enjoy.

Why not go one step further: when you go out birding take along an empty bag in your fanny-pack or knapsack to pack out the litter that some thoughtless person discarded before you. The next time you hit the trail, it will look much more attractive.

Russ Wilson

FIELD RECORDING WORKSHOP

The Nature Sounds Society (NSS) will hold a Field Recording Workshop, June 16-18, at San Francisco State's Yuba Pass Field Station, near Sierra City. Co-sponsored by the California Library of Natural Sounds at the Oakland Museum, the workshop will include talks, instruction on making sound recordings, and ample time to record singing birds and chirping insects in the wild. The program is open to amateurs and professionals; families are welcome. Cost is \$150 for members of NSS, \$165 for non-members. For further information, call Paul Matzner at the Oakland Museum, (510) 238-7482.

Back Yard Birder

Meg Pauletich

"What is a man without beasts? If all the beasts are gone, man would die from a great loneliness of spirit. But whatever happens to the beasts, soon happens to man. All things are connected."

These wise words were spoken by Chief Seattle in 1844. In centuries past, man struggled to "conquer" nature, to use the earth and her creations for man's profit and pleasure. Thanks to tools and machines, nature has been mastered. By the end of the 19th century, several bird species were made extinct and it became clear to some people that wildlife was being threatened by greedy men. A movement which began as mere conservation eventually grew into environmentalism. The threat was no longer wild-eyed hunters, but sophisticated technology. In fact, if it weren't for present-day duck hunters, our Central Valley would probably not provide decent habitat for the millions of migrating and wintering waterfowl that we now see.

There are numerous man-made threats specific to bird life: structures such as skyscrapers and TV towers, wind machines, and even our homes' windows; cars (most owl injuries); oil spills; alien bird species; man's companion animals (dogs, cats, rats, pigs, goats, etc.); beach recreation which disturbs not only nesting species, but migratory birds who rest and feed along our shores.

Pesticides caused the near-extinction of a number of bird species, the Peregrine Falcon, Brown Pelican, and Bald Eagle in particular.

We awoke to the perils of DDT in the nick of time, but many pesticides are still used in other countries where "our" birds spend time. Even though the garden pesticides we now use break down more quickly, they can still harm birds who eat poisoned

insects, or who sip nectar contaminated by systemic pesticides. There are ways to wean your garden off pesticides if you are patient and don't expect perfection. Start by planting disease-resistant plants. Control insects by hand-picking, knocking bugs off with a blast of water, or using insecticidal soapy sprays. Try a slow-release nitrogen fertilizer so you don't get a burst of juicy, new foliage. Lacewings and ladybugs are natural enemies of aphids.

If you feed birds, there is an ethical obligation not to jeopardize the lives of those birds. The cleanliness of your feeders is paramount. Hummingbird feeders should be cleaned and refilled at least once a week to prevent fungus from forming. A recent Lindsay Museum article suggested that clean seed feeders are equally important for preventing the spread of 4 deadly bird diseases. Wet seed forms a fungus that attacks birds' lungs. Salmonella is spread through fecal droppings around and under feeders. Some viruses are spread through dropped seeds. These perils can be wiped out by periodic disinfecting of feeders and by cleaning under feeders. Once a month, immerse feeder in solution of 1 part bleach and 9 parts tepid water for 2-3 minutes. Air-dry before refilling. Rake, sweep, or vacuum under feeders regularly. Try to spread the word to your neighbors since "your" birds are also "theirs." You can enjoy feeding birds with a clear conscience if you follow these precautions.

Just as the coal miners in the past took a canary into the mine shaft with them to warn them of lethal fumes, we must look to present-day birds for warning signals. The Peregrines, et al., warned us of pesticides' effects. Let us hope we will heed any new warnings of other miscalculations before there is no recourse.

Kids in Creeks:

An Interdisciplinary Creek Exploration Program for Educators of Grades K-12

Activities: Conduct creek clean-ups, stencil stormdrains, sample water quality, and more!

Creek-specific information: Includes historical information, newspaper articles, etc.

Maps of local creeks: Trace the creek near your school, and locate other *Kids in Creeks* teachers in your area.

Access to lending library: Curriculum, videos, stream inventory kits, and more...

Spring 1995 Events, Dates and Locations

Alameda County:
Fri, May 5, 4:30pm - 9pm and
Sat, May 6, 8:30am - 5pm at the
Sulphur Creek Nature Center, Hayward
Sat, May 13, 8:30am - 5pm
at Cesar Chavez, Union City

Kids in Creeks Annual Reunion:
Sat, May 20, 10:00am - 12:00pm
at the Lecture Hall, Oakland
Museum, Oakland
EVERYONE WELCOME!

Academic credit available. For more information, call Julia Crawford at the San Francisco Estuary Institute, (510) 231-9539 x655.



ENROLLMENT LIMITED TO EDUCATORS WORKING
IN ALAMEDA & CONTRA COSTA COUNTIES.



**Alameda Countywide
Clean Water Program**



Additional Funds provided by: The City
of Antioch Stormwater Program, the
Contra Costa County Stormwater
Program and the US EPA.

Observations: March 9 - April 5

Daniel Singer

LOONS TO DUCKS

A **Yellow-billed Loon** found dead at Dillon Beach, MRN, March 19 (LGr) is thought to be the same individual which spent several weeks in Tomales Bay off Hamlet. Thirty-five Black-footed Albatrosses at Southeast Farallon Island March 22 (fide KH) nearly doubled the island's previous high of 18. Clearly March 22 was a good day for albatross, as not only did SEFI have its fourth ever Laysan Albatross, but two were seen together at Point Arena, MEN, as well (SCR)! Also seen on this date at SEFI was a **Manx Shearwater**. This follows seemingly anomalous reports of this species from Monterey Bay in December and February. Whether this most recent report is of one that wintered regionally or a spring migrant is difficult to assess based on current knowledge of this species' status in California's offshore waters. Low numbers of Black-vented Shearwaters continued through the month off Pigeon Point, SM (RSTh, PJM), with an apparent surge on April 1 with 20 (BMcK).

Waterfowl are moving out of and through the region. A Ross' Goose spent several days near Pescadero, SM, March 24 - 27 (RSTh, BMcK). The Emperor Goose at Bodega, SON, was last reported March 27 (GGr). Blue-winged Teal are typically most numerous in our region during spring when they can be an uncommon to fairly common transient. An increase in reports beginning mid-month suggest many of these may be migrants. Two were at Coyote Hills Regional Park, ALA, March 13 (JM), three males were at Lake Merced, SF, March 17 (BLe), and singles were at scattered localities in Contra Costa, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Marin March 21 - 26 (m.ob.). Wintering Eurasian Wigeons, Tufted Ducks, Harlequin Ducks and Oldsquaws continued throughout the Bay Area during the month (m.ob.). An apparent hybrid Tufted Duck x scaup sp. in South San Francisco, March 15 - 21 (DHe, RSTh) is notable. Black Scoters were still present

in good numbers off Pacifica, SM, March 12 (DSg) and an impressive 35,000+ Surf Scoters were seen migrating past Pigeon Point, SM, March 19 (RSTh).

RAPTORS TO ALCIDS

A Broad-winged Hawk was reported from Five Brooks, Point Reyes, on March 24 (MDH fide HG). Did this individual go undetected all winter? Two Swainson's Hawks in Davis, YOL, March 23 (AIW) is further evidence that spring is finally here.

Mountain Plovers remained north of Davis through at least March 14 when 40 were observed (RHyr). High winds associated with strong storms during much of the month contributed to an influx of phalaropes throughout many of our coastal areas and San Francisco Bay. Red-necked Phalaropes were much earlier than usual with reports of up to 24 individuals spanning March 12 - 24 from Marin, San Mateo and Santa Clara (m.ob.). Red Phalaropes were abundant during this same time with a minimum of 158 birds reported between March 10 - 27 (m.ob.).

Pomarine Jaegers continued to be reported throughout the period from Pigeon Point, sea watches (RSTh, BMcK) and the first spring reports of Parasitic Jaeger, also from Pigeon Point, include one March 19 (RSTh) and another April 1 (BMcK). A Franklin's Gull near Oakley, CC, March 19 (RMc) fits the pattern of this species' spring movement through California. Glaucous Gulls were still in evidence with one in YOL March 12 (WEH), one in Inverness, MRN, March 19 (RS) and three at Pigeon Point between March 19 and 26 (RSTh). A well-studied **Common Tern** at Shoreline Lake, SCL, March 10 - 16, (LCh, MMR, BRe) is at an unprecedented time of year and is, presumably, an extremely early migrant. Common Terns typically move through our region in spring in late April and May. Except for one, all alcid reports during the period come from Pigeon Point and off Half Moon Bay, SM, with high counts of 12 Marbled Murrelets, March 26 (RSTh) and

eight Ancient Murrelets, March 27 (PJM). The lone exception was the 257th species seen from the observer's deck: an Ancient Murrelet at the mouth of Bolinas Lagoon, MRN, March 10 (KH)!

NIGHTJARS TO SHRIKES

Up to two Common Poorwills along Gazos Creek Road, SM, March 23 - April 2 (GJS, m.ob.), provided a rare opportunity to actually see this species. This species occurs regularly in chaparral habitat slightly inland in San Mateo during April, and probably breeds in some of these areas, but atlassers find it notoriously difficult to confirm.

Wintering Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers continued at Davis through March 23 (AIW), and in Milpitas, SCL, through March 16 (MMR). Another individual was along Butano Creek in coastal SM March 24 - 28 (BMcK), where it was joined by a Red-naped Sapsucker March 28 - April 2 (BMcK). Another Red-naped was in Walnut Creek, CC, March 21 - 27 (JGdm, GFi).

A Hammond's Flycatcher on Mt. Diablo, CC, April 5 is early (GFi). Our Eastern Phoebe lingered until March 14 at Point Reyes Station, MRN (MDH), March 16 at Davis (EDG), and April 1 in San Jose, SCL (SCR). A Clark's Nutcracker near Ano Nuevo, SM, on March 27 is a surprise (GJS fide RSTh). A Northern Shrike at the Ukiah Sewage Ponds, MEN, March 25 (GCh) was thought to be the same bird there in December.

VIREOS TO FINCHES

New spring arrivals are appearing in earnest by month's end. Reports of Warbling Vireo and Wilson's Warbler March 18 (both ASH) are on schedule, but Solitary Vireo March 24 (KH) is somewhat early and MacGillivray's Warbler April 2 is very early (DPo). A Black-and-white Warbler at Tomales Bay State Park, MRN, March 21 (CCo) no doubt wintered locally.

The female Summer Tanager along San Francisquito Creek in Palo Alto on

the SCL/SM border was still present March 19 (SBT). A Western Tanager at Mt. Davidson, SF, March 12 (MHe) probably wintered at or near this locale. The Green-tailed Towhee wintering along Coyote Creek in San Jose was still present March 11 (SCR). The single report of Swamp Sparrow was from SM near Pescadero March 23 - 30 (BMcK, DPo). A single Chestnut-collared Longspur in almost full alternate plumage was seen at the summit of Sierra Road, SCL April 1 (JiD).

The Great-tailed Grackle remained along Main Street in Tiburon, MRN, through March 25 (SCR). An immature male **Scott's Oriole** discovered in Golden Gate Park, SF, March 18 was still present through at least March 25 (ASH, JM, m.ob.), providing many with an opportunity to see a species rarely encountered in northern California (not to mention San Francisco).

The monthly observation column is generated from reports made to the Northern California Bird Box. Some sightings are unconfirmed and numbers of birds are often best regarded as estimates or "best guesses". In general, birds in boldface are very rare in our region, geographically or seasonally. Many of these are currently reviewed by the California Bird Records Committee (CBRC). Observers are encouraged to provide written and/or photographic documentation to the CBRC, c/o Michael Patten, P.O. Box 51959, Riverside, CA 92517-2959 for any species currently on the review list. A list of review species can also be obtained from the CBRC secretary at the address above.

Observers: George Chaniot, Les Chibana, Chris Corben, Jim Danzenbaker, Todd Esterla, Al Eisner, George Finger, Steve Glover, Janet Goodman, Leslie Grella, George Griffith, Travis Hales, Mary Halterman, Keith Hansen, Mike Healy, Donna Heim, Kevin Hints, David Hoffmann, Alan Hopkins, Rich Hoyer, Cindy Lieurance, Leslie Lieurance, John Luther, Bert McKee, Peter Metropulos, Joe Morlan, Roger Muscat, Dan Nelson, Linda Petrulius, David Powell, Peter Radcliff, Bob Reiling, Mike Rogers, Steve Rottenborn, Barry Sauppe, Doug Shaw, Dan Singer, Rich Stallcup, Gary Strachan, Ron Thorn, Dorothy Tobkin, Kaynor Weishaupt, Anna Wilcox, David Wimpfheimer, Adam Winer. Data thanks to Joe Morlan and the Northern California Bird Box.

Abbreviations for counties: ALA, Alameda; CC, Contra Costa; MEN, Mendocino; MRN, Marin; MTY, Monterey; SCL, Santa Clara; SF, San Francisco; SM, San Mateo; SON, Sonoma; YOL, Yolo

PANAMA COMMITTEE EVALUATES OUTREACH

At the March 20th meeting of the Panama Committee, several GGAS-Panama outreach proposals were discussed. These included: fund-raising to support Panama Audubon's on-going programs; gathering used optical equipment to ship; and developing trips to Panama for California birders.

Panama Audubon's president, Norita Scott Pezet, sent Miles McKey, GGAS comommittee coordinator, three proposals with suggested levels of financial participation.

- ➔ Third Annual International Bird Festival. October 1995
Active Sponsorship - \$15,000
- ➔ Books and Binoculars for the People of Panama 1995
One-year Subscription - \$3,000
- ➔ Environmental Workshops and Birding Field Trips
Continuous Support - Money, Opticals, Expertise

These are challenging and excellent program-funding goals. Committee members agreed to continue researching how GGAS could work within PAS' plans and develop other no-expense cross-cultural relationships.

Optical recycling is an option that may have little initial expense, though import duties must be paid upon receipt in Panama, *unless* the optics are hand-carried into the country. Already ten pairs of binoculars, provided through Mt. Diablo Audubon's joint recycling effort with Wild Birds, Inc., and a scope have been shipped to Panama. The Mt. Diablo chapter and Wild Birds are encouraging people to donate their used optics to the store or to the chapter, or to contribute money to buy new ones. So far 30 pairs of binoculars have been received for donation to Latin American countries.

We have one volunteer Spanish translator. As time goes on, we may well need the help of others and would welcome their presence on the Panama Committee. Planning fund-raising events

and travel to Panama will be greatly facilitated by fluent Spanish speakers.

If you have any interest in joining this committee and exploring Panama, come to the next meeting on Monday, May 15, 7:30 p.m. at Miles McKey's home, 76 Hillcrest Road, Berkeley. Call him at (510) 652-5854.

Corinne Stefanick

CHICKADEE CLUB VOLUNTEERS WANTED

7-year-old Sarah says: "I love the Chickadee Club!"

You'll love the Chickadee Club too when you volunteer to lead small groups of children and their parents on short birdwalks around Berkeley.

The Jefferson School Chickadee Club now has over 150 members. We are not short on enthusiasm or children - just adults who are willing to share some of their knowledge and a little time.

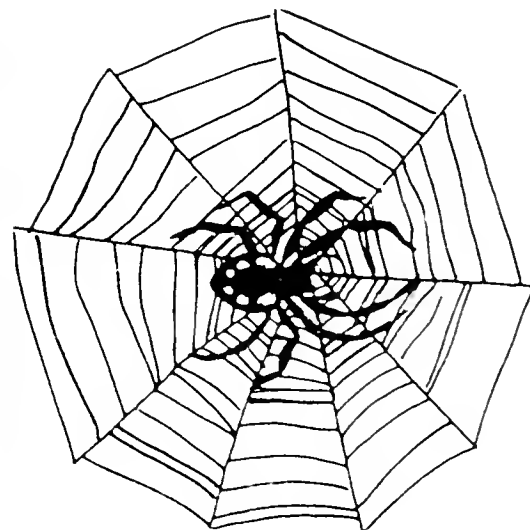
In February several volunteers from Golden Gate Audubon took over 70 Chickadee Club members and parents on short trips to Tilden, Lake Anza, and the Berkeley Marina. Some of the children who participated had never seen Tilden Park!

We want to schedule a second round of trips in May to welcome Spring migrants.

Will you help us?

We will have an orientation meeting in early May. Please call John Poole at (510) 286-1302 (days) or (510) 549-0784 (eves.) or the GGAS office (510) 843-2222 for date and location.

John Poole



May Meeting: Common Butterflies of the Bay Area and Costa Rica with Bob Stewart

Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda, Berkeley

Thursday, May 11, 7:30 p.m.

There are about as many species of butterflies in North America as there are birds. In recent years, many birders have also been watching butterflies. Not wanting to kill in order to identify, they have become, like their birding friends, photographers and watchers. Close-focus binoculars and modern cameras have made it easier.

Bob Stewart taught 6 years in California's public schools and for the last 27 has been a naturalist in Marin County. Currently he leads 130 free public walks per year for the Marin County Open Space District. His expertise ranges from birds to butterflies to wildflowers and mushrooms and his wonderful walks are an eye-opening delight to youngsters, oldsters, and everyone in between. He has a MA degree in Biology from Oregon State University.

He will show his own slides (Ed. note: they're stunning) in an attempt to stimulate your interest in the commonest butterflies with helpful hints as to how to sort them out.

This will be our Annual Meeting and the final general get-together before the summer break. Come and celebrate the butterflies and meet your officers and directors and get a wrap-up on the what's happening with Golden Gate Audubon as we move through a tumultuous environmental era.

FROM THE EDITOR:

Our cover has a different look this month. We don't expect it to be a permanent change, but in the midst of what was thought to be a friendly political administration, the environmental community faces the greatest threat in its history. Twenty-five years of progress, always hard-fought for and painfully miniscule in the overall scheme of things, may go down the tubes if the present reign in Congress has its way. While the President and the Secretary of the Interior diddle and worry about reelection, our natural world founders in a sea of human greed. It is worth noting that our founding fathers, who borrowed heavily from English philosopher John Locke, chose to make "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" our unalienable rights, rather than Locke's "life, liberty and property." It is easy to get bogged down in a sense of world-weary hopelessness when faced with the depressing statistics of our declining environment, but political know-nothingness is a scourge we can fight and defeat. Small steps forward are infinitely better than great leaps backward. Please sign the petition and gather additional signatures and let your elected representatives know that "the pursuit of happiness" is more than the amassing of additional dollars... it is the requirement for a world that is fit to live in.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

As a member of National Audubon Society, you are automatically enrolled in the local chapter, Golden Gate Audubon Society. Chapter benefits include receipt of *The Gull*, access to field trips and programs, and the opportunity to volunteer. Call the office if you have any questions.

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Arthur Feinstein (510) 843-2222

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Weekly Rare Bird Summary

(415) 738-1499

5 species of loon have been seen in California

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